

**PREREQUISITE TRAINING
FOR PROMOTION TO FIRE LIEUTENANT
IN THE TACOMA FIRE DEPARTMENT**

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

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An applied research project submitted to the National Fire
Academy as part of the Executive Fire Officer Program

January 1998

ABSTRACT

The City of Tacoma hired an independent consulting firm, TriData, to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the Tacoma Fire Department in 1991. In response to this study, the initial action of the department was to form a training task force; the Training Advancement Team (TAT). As this team worked on the overall training plan for the department, a sub-team was to address the consideration and recommendations of a prerequisite to fire lieutenant.

The purpose of this research was to make a recommendation to the prerequisite training needs of a firefighter desiring to promote to the position of fire lieutenant. An evaluative research method was used to answer the following questions:

1. What skills and training are needed to be a first line supervisor?
2. What skills or training are needed to be a safe and effective fire lieutenant in the Tacoma Fire Department at the time of promotion to the position?
3. What established standardized prerequisite programs are offered for the first line supervisor?

The literature reviewed and results obtained support the need to initiate a prerequisite program for fire lieutenant. The results also identified that the National Fire Protection's NFPA 1021: Standards for Fire Officer best meets this need.

The Tacoma Fire Department should continue the partnership with Bates Technical College in the plan to implement a program to fulfill the National Fire Protection Association 1021, which provides a transferable college credit curriculum within the Pierce County community. This recommendation supports the need to recognize that the employee is our most valued and underutilized resource in the fire service today.

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INTRODUCTION

The need to develop employees, and specifically the new supervisor, is a responsibility both the fire service and the private sector business share. In recent years, the fire service has had to meet a broader variety and higher number of needs for the citizens of our community. This increase of needs is coupled with the citizen demand for a higher quality of current services provided. With these increased demands, one may expect to have matching funds to provide these services. In many cases, however, the fire service meets these demands for increased service without additional staffing or funds.

The need to provide the opportunity for our personnel to effectively perform their daily duties, and provide a career path to fully use and develop their talents, is a necessity to compete successfully in today's public service environment. It is the Tacoma Fire Department's desire to continually improve the training and educational process used in enhancing the knowledge and skills of its employees. Currently, the department has two teams looking into these training and educational needs: the Training Advancement Team (TAT), which is addressing overall department training; and Team 2001, which is specifically targeting those individuals wishing to promote within the Department to fire lieutenant (the first line supervisor).

The purpose of this research project is to determine the training and educational needs of a fire lieutenant in the Tacoma Fire Department and to provide recommendations regarding a prerequisite to the position of fire lieutenant. A review of literature, as well as interviews conducted with Randal Beaton, Ph.D., University of Washington School of Nursing, Department of Psychosocial and Community Health, Seattle, Washington, and Chief Richard Graeber, Bates Technical College, Tacoma, Washington, form the basis of the evaluative research seeking to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What are the skills and training which are needed to be a first line supervisor?
2. What skills or training are needed to be a safe and effective fire lieutenant in the Tacoma Fire Department at the time of promotion to the position?
3. What established standardized prerequisite programs are offered for the first line supervisor?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

"Fire Departments around the globe are starting to recognize that establishing a direction and a goal for their members, especially the officers, is an important element of professional growth" (Gardiner, 1992-June, pg. 5).

The Tacoma Fire Department is unable to dispute this need exists in its own organization. The need to provide direction and goal orientation to existing and future officers of the department should be paramount in its day to day operations.

In 1991, the Office of the City Manager requested a study of the Tacoma Fire Department's resource allocations. In February 1992, the final report was published by TriData Corporation of Arlington, Virginia. "The prime thrust was to assess the adequacy of staffing levels in the various units of the Fire Department, both to see if a better use of existing resources was possible and whether the City's needs were likely to be met for the immediate and longer term future" (TriData, 1992, pg. 1-1). The initial study stemmed from specific fiscal discussions pertaining to overtime, call back staffing levels of on-duty positions and total budget dollars in a tight economy. The goals were soon broadened to encompass a comprehensive assessment of all functions and services of the Fire Department.

The study identified 81 problem areas and made specific recommendations to correct the issues cited.

Most important to this research project, eleven problem areas in the training program were indicated. The following eleven recommendations were considered pertinent to the development of an officer prerequisite program:

- Form a department-wide Training Task Force to develop a long range plan.
- Implement an officer training program.
- Increase safety training.
- Add a training module on ethnic and gender sensitivity to recruit and officer classes.
- Divide training courses into modules that fit the 24-hour shift structure.
Keep training flexible and facilitate make-up time.
- Develop or adapt a training manual to improve on consistency.
- Delegate more training responsibility to field personnel.
- Increase the amount of evening in-house training time.
- Build a new training facility to address inadequate classroom space and upgrade teaching equipment technology.
- Utilize in-service training to minimize replacement times and overtime costs.
- Increase officers networking with colleagues to identify productivity-enhancing ideas used in other departments.
- Use documented training to address departmental planning and budgeting.

In 1996, the Tacoma Fire Department established the recommended task force, the Training Advancement Team (TAT), to research and make recommendations for a training plan to correct the deficiencies and implement the recommendations of the TriData Report.

In November 1996, TAT conducted an organizational training needs assessment with division heads and supervisors. TAT facilitated an affinity diagram which generated 75 issues in five groupings (Intradepartmental Communication Needs Assessment, 1996-July). The top priorities in the five categories are as follows:

- Specific Training Needs: training manual, firefighter and officer certification, use own resources and supervisor for training.
- Training Division: Fire Channel location moved to Training Center, Training Advisory Team, more training for personnel.
- Outside Training: access to outside training, career development, National Fire Academy access.
- Training Equipment and Facilities: new training facility, training props, new training tower and more satellite training sites.
- Documentation: training documentation, certification tracking and increased accountability.

In “Tacoma Tomorrow, Planning Today for the Twenty-first Century” the City government has been increasingly called upon to provide more services to its citizens, while addressing restraints on resources (City of Tacoma Strategic Plan, 1995, pg. 58).

It has been recognized that our employees are the City’s most important and valued resource. The directive of the City is to utilize these employees to provide quality government performance by focusing upon an organizational commitment to the customer through continuous process, performance and service improvement. We are charged with the responsibility to foster the development of a quality work force.

This document has established a team to develop a City-wide plan to address the training needs of all employees, including prerequisite training needs of employees aspiring to become supervisors and further development of current supervisors.

Additional supporting documents to the development of a prerequisite training requirement for Fire Department personnel was the Labor Agreement of 1996, which established and implemented new procedures for establishing Civil Service Eligible Lists for the promotional position of fire lieutenant.

This change has the following impact:

- A single list from which all lieutenant positions will be hired, to include lieutenant dispatchers, fire inspectors, battalion chiefs' aides/safety officers, field operations lieutenants and training lieutenants. Previous practice was a separate test for each of the above followed by a separate eligibility list.
- The minimum service time requirement as a firefighter prior to taking the promotional exam was raised from 3 years to 5 years.
- In order to assist personnel in preparing to be successful and competent lieutenants, Fire Administration has strengthened its commitment to training and education. As a result of this commitment, a prerequisite training requirement will be established.
- The requirement will be developed and approved by both Labor and Administration (Local #31 Labor Agreement, 1996).

This research project relates to the Executive Development Program by identifying and prioritizing subjects most commonly taught and/or required as a prerequisite to being promoted to a supervisor or fire lieutenant. This project will allow the Executive Officer, with the task of developing a prerequisite training standard, to review the recommendations of this research project and make adjustments to the development of their own departmental needs of a prerequisite to fire lieutenant.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Related facts and pertinent data were gathered in order to make a recommendation regarding the prerequisite training requirements of a firefighter in the Tacoma Fire Department desiring to advance to the first line supervisory position of fire lieutenant.

The Tacoma Fire Department was in transition. The Training Center had applied for Washington State certification in its recruit training. The department planned to train current firefighters to an equivalency of the National Fire Protection Association NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications (1992), and NFPA 1002: Standard for Fire Department Vehicle Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications (1993), over a two year span.

The literature identified the subjects historically taught in professional officer development programs, in conjunction with the private sector, for training of a first line supervisor. This training focused on the identification of what a fire lieutenant would need on day one of their promotion to be a safe and effective supervisor.

It is evident that there is a difference in the focus of development programs between the public and private sectors. The public sector traditionally focuses only on supervisory development skills and could benefit greatly from the expanded private sector model. This expanded model includes customer service skills, product delivery and managing the fire service generally as a business.

Recognizing that there is a cornucopia of material published in the above categories, an emphasis was placed on acknowledgment of the movement to increase the professionalism of the fire service nationally and the need for standardization of training within the fire service.

In 1993, Chief Jones of Chapel Hill, North Carolina made the prediction of which skills and competencies the future officer would need in the year 2000. Reviewing his prediction, and the changes that have occurred in the last seven years, may provide an insight on how fast the fire service is making the transition into the next century (Jones, 1993-July).

Leadership: This has become one of the most important competencies of a fire officer. “By the year 2000, fire officers will lead the most culturally diverse and gender balanced fire service ever” (Jones, 1993-July, pg. 6). It will require excellent interpersonal skills and a genuine appreciation for diversity in the fire service team.

Technology: In this area it has become evident that all organizations will need to make a concerted effort in keeping personnel aware of, and provide for, the training to become proficient in the rapidly occurring changes.

Environment: The fire service has been making the natural move toward becoming a lead player in local environmental issues. Many departments now provide hazardous material teams. As cities and towns continue to face shrinking dollars, we may find ourselves assuming emergency management. With the acquisition of these new roles, there will be a need to recognize other agencies' responsibilities and the varying roles of those agencies. A strong skill in partnership development will be needed.

Education/Training: The important roles provided by educators and trainers has been accepted by the fire service. We continue to recognize the need to train our own personnel. We also have the duty of raising public awareness in fire safety and local environmental issues. This is the only way to make a difference (Jones, 1993-July).

In 1993, Bates Technical College conducted a training needs assessment by skill category of the City of Tacoma employees, including Fire Department personnel. The assessment determined a key area of needed skills fell within the Human Relations category. The following priorities were identified: listening skills, customer service, dealing with difficult people, team building, time and priority management, stress management, cultural diversity and problem solving. The only other area of significant priority fell in technological needs, specifically computer skills (Bates, 1993-June).

The results of the Bates needs assessment was weighed against the fire service specific research of Captain Debra Pryor, of the Berkeley, California Fire Department, which identified via survey the following ten areas of training needs for pre-officer development within the Berkeley Fire Department:

- Report writing skills
- Berkeley Fire Department Administrative Practices
- Fire Tactics and Strategies
- Hazardous Materials Scene Management
- Emergency Medical Scene Management
- Community Relations
- Fire Prevention Practices
- Budget Preparation
- Communication (oral and written)
- Human Resource Management

In summary, Capt. Pryor's research material concluded that the performance requirements listed in NFPA 1021: Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, were most applicable in the following twelve areas for pre-officer development within the Berkeley Fire Department (Pryor, 1996, pg. 10, 11):

2.2 Human Resource Management

- 2.3 Community Awareness/Public Relations
- 2.4 Organizational Structure
- 2.5 Administration
- 2.6 Budget
- 2.7 Government Structure
- 2.8 Communications Skills
- 2.9 Information Management
- 2.10 Planning
- 2.11 Inspection, Investigation and Public Education
- 2.12 Emergency Service Delivery
- 2.13 Safety

The Bates needs assessment was also weighed against the Fire Service specific research of Training Director Ed Kirtley, Colorado Springs Fire Department. The purpose of Kirtley's research was to prioritize the most common topics in company officer development programs of career fire departments. Director Kirtley wanted to weigh the priority of subject matter taught in Company Officer Professional Development programs to address the lack of time to provide ample attention to all subjects, and to make an attempt to identify which subjects would have top priority in a limited time for teaching a set curriculum. A survey was conducted of the Training Resource and Data Exchange (TRADE) chief training officers (Kirtley, 1996, pg. ii).

Of the 146 training chiefs who were mailed the survey, 59 responded. Of the 59 responses, the following priority of training was determined for an officer development program. See Appendix A.

The following programs for Fire Officers were reviewed for compatibility within the Tacoma Fire Department's consideration as a prerequisite for fire lieutenant.

The Florida Fire Officer Certification Program consists of a seven-part instructional curriculum followed by a test; a certificate of competency is awarded.

The seven areas are as follows:

Fire Service Instructor: Methods & Techniques. This course explores the methods and mechanics of adult learning principles and the use of media and visual aids.

Company Officer: This course provides a review of fire department organization and administration management theory, leadership, communication, motivation and group dynamics. It focuses on how to solve problems and situations encountered as a supervisor.

Hazardous Materials I: This course is based on the National Fire Academy's "Site Operating Practices" program.

Hazardous Material II: This course is also based on the National Fire Academy's "Site Operating Practices" program. With the continuation of Hazardous Materials I.

Firefighting Tactics & Strategy I: This course covers the basics of fire scene management at the constantly changing incident. It also covers how to determine the best use of resources.

Fire Prevention Practices: This course studies fire inspection practices and activities, with emphasis on fire causes, construction and occupancy types, flame spread, and fire loads.

Private Fire Protection Systems: This course covers private fire systems such as sprinklers, stand pipes, chemical extinguishing agents and fire detection systems.

Each of the above seven courses represents 40 hours and three college credits. Upon the successful completion of the seven prerequisite courses, an individual becomes eligible to test for Fire Officer I qualification.

In 1989, Training Captain Gary Peyton, Aurora, Colorado, Fire Department, established a development program that began at the fire fighter recruit level and proceeded through the rank of Battalion Chief. The program was implemented in 1990, with a class made up of “78 Top Grade Firefighters” (Peyton, 1989). All participants had volunteered for the program and all were eligible to work as acting Lieutenants within the department.

The program itself was divided into twelve 8-hour modules, which covered such areas as leadership, interpersonal skills, strategies and tactics, and practical application. The twelve month period allowed time for reading, research, projects (to include research papers) and preparation time for examinations. Since 1994, the program has been offered throughout the Denver metropolitan area, providing a proactive approach to train future officers, with an emphasis on keeping the program dynamic, and attempting to meet or surpass the state and national standards for officer certification.

The following program development occurring in King and Pierce counties of Washington State were also identified in the search for programs adaptable to the Tacoma Fire Department. Their programs would most likely address the same Washington State Standards, which the Tacoma Fire Department would need to recognize.

In 1996, the King County Training Officer Association, Officer Development Academy was started. The Academy allows firefighters to complete the National Fire Professional Association 1021 Fire Officer Level 1 course within a six-week period. The entire program is one year long and consists of eleven classes which are presented over six separate weeks (King County Training Officers, 1997).

In October 1997, Bates Technical College (BTC) hosted a roundtable of Pierce County fire departments in which the Tacoma Fire Department participated. The scope and purpose of the roundtable was to 1) fulfill NFPA 1021 Standards for Fire Officer, 2) provide a personal development career track for firefighters, 3) develop and improve skills of persons currently in fire officer positions, 4) utilize curriculum that can transfer to college degree credit, 5) utilize distance learning capabilities currently available at Bates College.

Chief Richard Graeber, of BTC, led the discussions of the design and implementation of an officer training program. The program was identified as a modified copy of the approved State Board of California Fire Officer Program. The California program was developed by an advisory committee of the California Fire Chiefs Association.

The following private sector supervisory programs were reviewed to bridge the public sector goals with the private sector business.

The City of Virginia Beach provided an accredited program in an effort to assist all employees in their quest to improve themselves and the quality and productivity of their organizations. The program consists of four tracks:

The Foundation Track, which should be attended by all employees.

The Personal Growth Track, which employees are encouraged to attend, as it provides a quality environment whereby they can become more productive.

The Professional Development Track, which was designed to give direction to further develop employees professionally.

The Team Leadership Track, which provides courses that are important to all leaders working in municipal government. This track focuses on policy guidance, procedural systems and knowledge for effective leadership.

In the book by Donald R. Kirkpatrick, How to Train and Develop Supervisors, the following study case of AT&T was illustrated:

“AT&T, a pioneer in developing the assessment center, identified 460 supervisors considered to be superior supervisors by their managers.”

“From these supervisors, they identified the following areas as most important:

- Planning the work
- Controlling the work
- Problem solving
- Providing performance feedback
- Creating and maintaining a motivational atmosphere
- Time management
- Informal oral communication
- Self-development
- Written communication
- Knowledge of the Bell System

- Career counseling
- Meeting communications

“The range of courses focused on four subject areas: improving communication skills, developing administrative and supervisory skills, leading and working with people, and making the change from a worker to a supervisor” (Kirkpatrick, 1993, pg. 204).

The Management Institute of the University of Wisconsin has a well known twelve-day certification program for supervisors. The program was developed for new supervisors, as well as those who had been supervising for several years. This program would allow for an intensive, one time approach of training for a supervisor.

The importance of leadership and supervisory skills took priority, not only in the need to motivate, oversee, supervise and lead the personnel assigned to a fire lieutenant, but also to address the health issues which surround the fire service, as well. The following health related area was deemed important for consideration in the development and preparation of an officer in the Tacoma Fire Department.

The professional firefighters (to include paramedics) in the cities of Everett and Tacoma, Washington, are involved in a project by Dr. Randal Beaton, Shirley Murphy, and Mary Salazar, researchers at the University of Washington. The project is to collect data on exposure to duty-related incident stressors and post trauma symptoms in firefighters and paramedics. The study is set for a 3-year period. “These data will illuminate the natural history of post-trauma symptomatology, alcohol use and other stress-related symptoms in terms of their relationship(s) to the long-term cumulative exposure to job-related trauma as well as to the other predictors, moderating and mediating variables. The findings will assist in the development and remedial interventions for firefighters and serve as a model for parallel endeavors with other high strain occupations.” (Beaton, 1997-July, Interview).

Dr. Beaton addressed the results from the ongoing survey of Tacoma Fire Department personnel which clearly indicate the personnel had a prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder of 31.7%, in comparison to the general population at 1.2% and wounded Vietnam Veterans at 20% (Beaton, 1997-July). Wayne Corneil, Director of Employee Assistance Services of Health and Welfare in Canada, states that the frequency of job related stressors, both 'critical' and 'routine', significantly increased the risk of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Firefighters (Corneil, 1993).

The documentation collected to this point in the study provides strong evidence that officers are experiencing higher levels of stress and urgently need to be trained to cope with these stresses. The training of the officers will, in turn, most likely reduce the stressors in the firefighter ranks. The objective of the training recommended is to 1) recognize sources and symptoms of stress in fire service supervisors, 2) inspect individual approaches to stress management, 3) depict some unique aspects of management in the fire service, 4) learn a validated model of leadership effectiveness with leadership match training, 5) ascertain one's own personal leadership style and how it might interact with stress and situation control, 6) learn ways to match individual leadership style to leadership situation, 7) recognize ways in which job-relevant experience, training, stress and uncertainty interact with ones leadership style. (Beaton, 1997-July).

The review of several articles from the fire service indicated a recurring theme both from the veterans and current leaders of the fire service:

“After all these years, we are still promoting first and training later.” (Shurtleff, 1994-August, pg. 21-26).

“The type of training and specific subjects need to be determined by each department, but NFPA’s professional qualifications serve as the beginning.” (Smalley, 1984-August, pg.47).

“The effective fire service leader must have diverse and flexible leadership skills and styles. He or she must be able to effectively articulate the organization’s vision, and create a sense of ownership in that vision, in numerous internal and external environments. This is leadership; anything less is merely managing inertia.” (Sanders, 1994-August, pg. 21-26).

“To meet these changes effectively they must develop the skill and inclination to continually learn, unlearn and relearn new, different, better ways and skills to match the current state of their first due environment” (Brunacini, 1994-August, pg. 21-26).

Lt. Bruce J. Cavallari, in his article in Fire Engineering on the subject of Company Officer Certification, lends credibility to the importance of building a bridge between firefighters who desire advancement and company officers responsible for leadership duties.

The fire service has recognized that the lieutenant must motivate his or her assigned personnel in order to accomplish the department’s goals, both on and off the emergency scene. “The fire service had historically only done the training of its officers by on-the-job training (OJT). How could we leave the most valuable resource in the care of an unqualified or untrained supervisor?” (Cavallari, 1997-May, pg. 16). This makes a strong statement in favor of the need for a certified program, such as the National Fire Protection Association 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 1992 edition.

The 1992 edition of the above has been approved by the American National Standards Institute. The document outlines the performance objectives for an officer in the fire service while allowing each department to tailor the objectives to meet its organizational responsibilities.

The document is widely known within the fire service. Much of the reviewed literature acknowledges its value in providing direction for setting standards, and in providing a consistent plan from which to work. The performance of NFPA 1021 objectives are courses available through the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland and field programs which will provide needed networking.

The need for a strong foundation upon which to develop the fire officer is available by providing the training set forth in NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications (1992), and NFPA 1002: Standard for Fire Department Vehicle Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications, (1993).

The members of the fire service will always hold the job specific responsibilities of Firefighter Safety, Strategy and Tactics, and Incident Management above the somewhat mundane side of the profession most commonly referred to as the non-emergency scene. In the past, a fire department could survive by performing at a high level of proficiency on the emergency scene. A fire department which tries to operate in this mode will be extinct in the dynamic fire service of today. The most accessible way to meet the changes of today in the fire service is by acknowledging that the firefighter has been, and continues to be, the most valued and underutilized resource available to the fire service.

PROCEDURES

Literature Review

The research used in preparing this paper began with a literature review at the Learning Resource Center located at the National Emergency Training Center, Emmitsburg, Maryland, in July 1997. Further investigation was conducted using resources found at the Pierce County Library, Tacoma, Washington, the City of Tacoma Human Resources and Training Division and material requested from fire departments located throughout the United States.

The initial internal review process began by examining the Department's current in-service status and training direction. This review revealed: 1) the department had created a training task force, the Training Advancement Team (TAT), 2) the Department was in the process of reviewing the Training Advancement Team's recommendations and 3) the Department was addressing the implementation of TAT's proposed long range training plan. This plan outlined a two-year program in which the Tacoma Fire Department would anticipate its recruit training academy to be Washington State Fire Service certified, and all current firefighters be trained to a standard equivalent of NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications (1992), and NFPA 1002: Standard for Fire Department Vehicle Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications, (1993). Acknowledging the above direction of planned standardized training, the literature review then focused on subjects and programs taught in established officer/supervisor development courses within the fire service and private sector business at large.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with Randal Beaton, Ph.D., University of Washington School of Nursing, Department of Psychosocial and Community Health, on July 1, 1997, and a follow-up interview by telephone on August 21, 1997. The initial

interview was conducted concerning data collected on psychosocial risk factors in the etiology and progression of secondary traumatic stress in firefighters and paramedics in the Tacoma Fire Department. The follow-up interview was to address the Leadership development program recommendation to reduce the high stress level indicated in Tacoma Fire Department officers.

An interview was also conducted with Chief Richard Graeber, Bates Technical College, Tacoma, Washington, on October 10, 1997. This interview concerned the development and implementation of a Fire Officer Development Program through the college.

Survey Site Background

The Tacoma Fire Department has four hundred and thirteen uniformed firefighters and twenty-three civilian employees. The area of service is approximately sixty square miles with a population of approximately 205,000. The sample group consisted of on-duty uniformed employees. These included probationary firefighters, firefighters, lieutenants, captains, battalion chiefs, assistant chiefs and deputy chiefs. The survey was conducted on four consecutive days to reach the department's four shifts.

Survey Description

A survey instrument designed and distributed by Team 2001, based on the Kirtley Survey (1996), was used to appraise training requirements that would meet both current and future needs of a Tacoma Fire Department lieutenant. Design components included a field test on a control group consisting of five percent of the uniformed members of the Department. Following analysis of the control group responses, Team 2001 edited the survey and distributed the revised version to the uniformed members of the Department.

The subjects used on question five of the survey were the subjects selected by the review of NFPA 1021 and the Kirtley Survey, with the final draft reviewed and edited by members of the Team 2001 representatives. The primary elements of the survey were:

- Questions 1 through 3 addressed personal data relative to the respondents.
- Question 4 addressed the respondents' perception of the current training of a fire lieutenant.
- Question 5 addressed the respondents' perception of importance to a prerequisite list of subjects.
- Question 6 addressed the respondents' perception of the need of a prerequisite to fire lieutenant.
- Question 7 addressed any additional comments the respondents perceived relevant to the survey.

Complete copies of the cover sheet and survey are located in Appendix B.

Analysis of Data

Two hundred and twenty-eight surveys were returned. The data from the surveys was compiled, entered into a database and analyzed to determine what, if any, consensus or perceptions existed.

Definitions

call back staffing The act of calling in off-duty personnel to maintain the minimum staffing level to operate a fire department

field personnel Uniformed members of a department who work within the operations division.

- fire channel** Closed-circuit television operated by field personnel and civilian assistants to produce training films and information programs which are aired at all fire stations
- first due** Refers to an assigned district a fire crew would be responsible for and worked within that district as a routine assignment
- environment** responsible for and worked within that district as a routine assignment
- drill groups** a preassigned group of crews which would attain training together

Limitations and Assumptions

The survey was not distributed to each group in the same manner. As each drill group was in attendance, a survey with written instructions was available to complete. Some groups were given an oral request to complete the survey and were able to request information from the survey representative on site, in addition to the written instructions. The method of distribution did not allow for members not on duty during the four days to participate in the survey. Of the 413 uniformed personnel eligible to the survey group, only 321 were reached for the survey due to the distribution method chosen. Other limitations were the lack of explanation of the definitions used on the survey questions. The assumptions that all participants answered the questions truthfully and understood the questions were not confirmed.

RESULTS

The analysis and interpretation of the survey include a review of: 1) the personal data of the respondents, 2) the respondents' perceptions of the current training of a fire lieutenant in the department, 3) the perception of the need to require a prerequisite to test for fire lieutenant and 4) the subject matter most pertinent for a fire lieutenant to have received prior to promotion.

Results of the survey questions are as follows:

1. Of the 228 respondents' time in service with the Tacoma Fire Department, 143 members, or 62.7%, have less than 15 years of experience.
2. With the exception of 31 respondents, or 13.6%, the remaining 197, or 86.4%, have had experience working up in an in-charge position as a lieutenant.
3. The following is a breakdown of the respondents by rank:

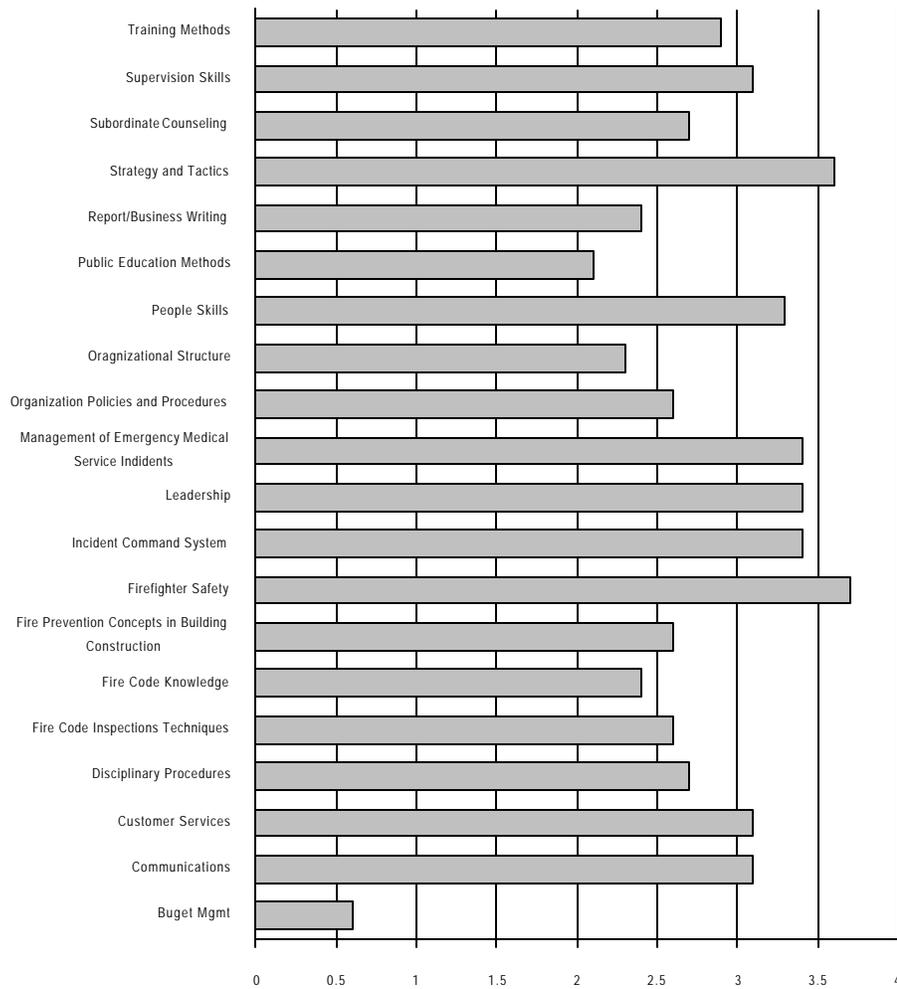
Rank	Number	%
Firefighter	138	60.5
Firefighter/Paramedic	15	6.6
Lieutenant	52	22.8
Captain	12	5.3
Battalion Chief	9	3.9
Assistant Chief or above	2	0.9

4. Of the respondents, 129, or 56.6%, felt that the current training for fire lieutenant is poor. Further rating of the training is listed below:

Rating	Number	%
Poor	129	56.6
Average	81	35.5
Very good	16	7.0
Excellent	2	0.9

5. On a scale of 0 (not very important) to 4 (very important), the following subjects were rated by importance for a new fire lieutenant to have received prior to the first day of appointment:

Subject	Average rating
Budget Management	0.6
Communications	3.1
Customer Service	3.1
Disciplinary Procedures	2.7
Fire Code Inspection Techniques	2.6
Fire Code Knowledge	2.4
Fire Prevention Concepts in Building Construction	2.6
Firefighter Safety	3.7
Incident Command System	3.4
Leadership	3.4
Management of Emergency Medical Service Incidents	3.4
Organization Policies and Procedures	2.6
Organizational Structure	2.3
People Skills	3.3
Public Education Methods	2.1
Report/Business Writing	2.4
Strategy and Tactics	3.6
Subordinate Counseling	2.7
Supervision Skills	3.1
Training Methods	2.9



Importance of Subjects (0 = not important to 4 = very important)

6. Of the 228 respondents, 149, or 65.4%, supported “required” training and education prior to the exam process.
7. In Appendix C is the list of the respondents’ comments or concerns regarding areas of training or education that were not specifically identified in the survey.

Research Questions

1. What are the skills and training that are needed to be a first line supervisor?

The literature reviewed provided the needs assessment of employees with the City of Tacoma, including firefighters. The main point of convergence of the City collectively was in the Human Relations skills: listening skills, handling of difficult people, customer service, cultural awareness and team building. The area most closely following the key focus of human relations was the need for technological skills, computers being the key emphasis (Bates, 1993-June).

Throughout the literature review, four key areas proved to be most prevalent in subjects identified as being needed by a supervisor: 1) improving communication skills, 2) developing administrative skills, 3) developing supervisory skills and foremost 4) the leading and working with people, making the change from a worker to a supervisor (Kirkpatrick, 1993). The necessity to give a supervisor the foundation to build on and the ability to learn in a dynamic environment was best put by Brunacini, "To meet these changes effectively they must develop the skill and inclination to continually learn, unlearn and relearn new, different, better ways and skills to match the current state of their first due environment" (Brunacini, 1994-August, pg. 25).

2. What skills or training are needed to be a safe and effective Fire Lieutenant in the Tacoma Fire Department at the time of promotion to the position?

The results of the 2001 survey indicated that most respondents (86.3%), have had the opportunity to work up in the position of fire lieutenant. In addition, 56.6% of the respondents perceived the current training of a fire lieutenant to be 'poor' in a rating with a range of 'poor' to 'excellent'.

Survey question number five expresses the perception of the respondents as to what subject matter is most important for a new fire lieutenant to have received

prior to promotion. All of the subjects were rated as being significant with the exception of 'Budget Management', which received a rating of 0.6%.

Since the Tacoma Fire Department has chosen the foundation of a Washington State certified recruitment program and the equivalencies of NFPA 1001 and NFPA 1002 Standards, the logical continuation of the structure would be to follow up with the adoption of, or at least the equivalency of, NFPA 1021 Standard.

The results of the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) study with Tacoma and Everett firefighters would indicate an emphasis to provide a leadership program to address coping skills to handle the documented high levels of PTSD being demonstrated by the participants.

3. What established standardized prerequisite programs are offered for the first line supervisor?

The City of Virginia Beach's accredited program addresses their employees' quest for individual improvement and the organization, as a whole, to improve quality and productivity. This program lends to a curriculum that builds upon itself. The Four Track plan identifies a Foundation Track all employees will find essential. There is also a Personal Growth Track which employees are encouraged to attend for the development of a quality environment in which they can become more productive. The third and fourth tracks, Professional Development and Team Leadership, provide the professional with skills to be an effective leader in the municipal government arena.

The National Fire Protection Association's Fire Fighter through Officer Development Standards have provided the same type of program. They allow an individual in the fire service to plan his or her individual career path and follow a natural progression in development to a leadership position within the fire service. The proactive attitude of the National Fire Academy to continue to strive for a self

imposed higher standard will allow an individual much more freedom to manipulate the mobility of employment. With this mobility, an enrichment has been seen. In many instances, a career in the fire service starts and ends within the same department, causing individual departments that do not network or look outside of their own organization to grow stagnant.

The need to encourage networking and standardization in officer development programs is evident in the strong support across the United States to develop and implement programs to support this theory.

DISCUSSION

The need to provide a career guide to employees is more evident today than at any other noted time in history. This guide must provide a foundation that supports the goals of the organization and the employee at the same time.

This career guide should start with the selection process of a new recruit firefighter. Once the recruit is hired and has started his or her professional journey within the organization, he or she should meet a standardized program that will allow the individual to develop and hone their skills throughout their tenure.

It is evident there is a gap between the public sector fire service and the private sector business in their approach to accomplishing daily business. However, the urgency of the fire service to look at itself and reevaluate how it is doing business has become evident. The need to add value, do more with less and provide some fiduciary responsibilities are no longer foreign words to the fire service of today.

One of the best ways to approach this change is by recognizing that “our employees are the most important and valued resource” (Tacoma Tomorrow, 1995, page 59). By following this approach to change, there are some essentials to address. There is a need to provide a strong foundation of basic skills and training to furnish an

employee with a sense of ownership and the ability to affect their daily work. The programs reviewed addressed this need to develop all employees with a basic foundation. The NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, and NFPA 1002: Standard for Fire Department Vehicle Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications, meet these foundation requirements for the fire service.

Once an employee has meet the standards of the foundation, he or she may choose, or be encouraged, to make the bridge between firefighter and fire officer. It is only logical to provide a program that will build on the basics already provided within the employee's foundation of knowledge. The NFPA 1021: Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 1992 edition, has been able to develop a nationally recognized set of clear and concise job performance requirements that address the minimum standards for a fire officer. The four progressive levels allow both the organization and the fire officer to have a career path to follow. The recognition of this standard allows fire officers to come together and have a common starting ground to address current and future issues within the fire service.

The results of the study indicated that of the 228 respondents, all except 31 had experienced working up in an in-charge position as fire lieutenant. The fact that all subjects on the 2001 survey, with the exception of "Budget", were identified as needed supports the necessity of training for firefighters prior to being promoted. The results also expressed that the majority (56.6%) of the participants perceived the current training of a fire lieutenant to be 'poor' and supported (by 65.4%) the prerequisites for promotion to fire lieutenant.

It was evident both in the public and private sectors that there is a need to improve skills in Human Relations. Being able to communicate and deal well with people supports the expansion of supervision and leadership skills training.

The areas that were understandably held to be more vital than the Human Relations issues in the fire service were Firefighter Safety, and Strategy and Tactics.

The need to perform safely and efficiently as a team is, and will remain, the top priority in the fire service

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of this study are:

1. The Tacoma Fire Department Training Division should continue to move forward in attaining Washington State certification status for its Recruit Training Program.
2. The Tacoma Fire Department should continue to implement the Training Advancement Team's (TAT) recommendation to train and educate all firefighters to the NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications and NFPA 1002: Standard for Fire Department Vehicle Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications equivalent. TAT should include the NFPA 1021: Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications in the overall training plan of the department. The above programs should be similar in both structure and implementation.
3. The City of Tacoma and the Tacoma Fire Department should continue their partnership in the design and development of first line supervisor training requirements.
4. The Fire Department should continue cooperative effort with Bates Technical College in the planning of a program to fulfill the NFPA 1021: Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications. This program should provide a transferable college credit curriculum.
5. The Fire Department should accept Dr. Randal Beaton's proposed offer to begin delivery of a leadership development program to assist current Fire Officers in coping with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This program should also be incorporated as outlined in recommendation 6.

6. Team 2001 should generate fire lieutenant prerequisites that assist the Department in the transition of meeting NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, NFPA 1002: Standard for Fire Department Vehicle Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications, and NFPA 1021: Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications.

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Appendix A

Training Director Ed Kirtley, Colorado Springs Fire Department. The purpose of Kirtley's research was to prioritize the most common topics in company officer development programs of career fire departments.

Subject	Relative Priority
Supervision Skills	3.48
Leadership	4.00
Fire Fighter Safety	4.68
Interpersonal Communications	5.02
Budget Management	5.36
Interpersonal Relations	5.78
Strategy and Tactics	6.23
Incident Command System	6.92
Training Methods	7.95
Subordinate Counseling	8.28
Organization Policies and Procedures	8.62
Customer Service	8.88
Disciplinary Procedures	9.49
Organizational Structure	10.52
Report/Business Writing	10.70
Management of EMS Incidents	10.71
Public Education Methods	12.33
Code Inspection Techniques	13.02

Appendix B

Promotion 2001

January 15, 1996, the Tacoma Fire Department implemented new procedures for establishing Civil Service Eligible Lists for the promotional position of Fire Lieutenant.

This change has the following impact.

All Lieutenant positions will be hired from the same eligible list, to include:

Communications, Lieutenant Dispatcher

Fire Inspectors

Battalion Chief Aides

Field Operations, Lieutenant

Training, Lieutenant

Minimum Service Requirement: The new, comprehensive Civil Service Examination will include questions from Communications, Inspection, Battalion Chief Aides/Safety Officers, Field Operations, as well as an updated focus on supervisory skills. In order to ensure that each person has the opportunity to attend the necessary training classes and to gain developmental training required to develop a proficiency in each of these areas, the new minimum years of experience for taking the exam will be established at five years for any firefighter hired after June 1996. Causing any person taking an exam after June 1, 2001, to have a minimum of five-years experience.

This survey is being conducted by the 2001 Promotional Development Team to assist the team in making recommendations for future training. These results will be used in a research paper for the National Fire Academy by Deputy Chief Lewis. We would appreciate your response to the following seven questions.

Promotion 2001 Survey

1. How long have you been a member of the Tacoma Fire Department? (Please circle one.)
 - a. 0-4 years
 - b. 5-10 years
 - c. 11-15 years
 - d. 16-20 years
 - e. 21 or more

2. Have you had previous experience working up in an in-charge position as a Lieutenant? (Please circle one.)
 - a. No
 - b. 1-4 times
 - c. 5-10 times
 - d. 11-15 times
 - e. Over 15 times

3. What is your present position with the Tacoma Fire Department? (Please circle one).
 - a. Firefighter
 - b. Firefighter/Paramedic
 - c. Lieutenant
 - d. Captain
 - e. Battalion Chief
 - f. Assistant Chief or above

4. How effective do you feel the current Fire Lieutenant training is? (Please circle one.)
 - a. Poor
 - b. Average
 - d. Very good

e. Excellent

5. Please rate the following subjects by importance for a new Fire Lieutenant to have received prior to their first day of appointment.

	<u>Not Important</u>		<u>Very Important</u>		
	0	1	2	3	4
Budget Management	0	1	2	3	4
Communications	0	1	2	3	4
Customer Service	0	1	2	3	4
Disciplinary Procedures	0	1	2	3	4
Fire Code Inspection Techniques	0	1	2	3	4
Fire Code Knowledge	0	1	2	3	4
Fire Prevention Concepts in Building					
Construction	0	1	2	3	4
Firefighter Safety	0	1	2	3	4
Incident Command System	0	1	2	3	4
Leadership	0	1	2	3	4
Management of Emergency					
Medical Service Incidents	0	1	2	3	4

Appendix C
PROMOTION '2001' SURVEY RESULTS
QUESTIONS 6 AND 7

As a member of this Department, is it your opinion there should be prior “required” training or education to qualify for the Lieutenants Examination process?

Yes. To become a company officer, I feel you must show the ability and willingness to learn. There are certain aspects of the job you will be performing from day one on probation. That is not the time to have no clue as to what to do (i.e., strategy-tactics, size-up, offense, defense, I.C.S.)

Yes. Anyone can read and memorize the study material. Perhaps a degree in fire education.

No response.

Yes. If we had a Training Division that trained us to be supervisors and/or firefighters on Fire Department time.

No. The Lieutenant exam process should eliminate any and all candidates who are not capable to work in that position (wouldn't that be nice!)

Yes. To be confident in performing the job.

No.

Yes. I see a lot of firefighters studying for the Lieutenants test. I feel that this shows hopeful Lieutenants will want to be all that they can be...By seeking out minimum training prerequisites this will show motivation to be good vs. just be 'good enough'. However, the more test takers there are for a limited number of positions, logically, the quality will be higher.

No. The training should be available, but not necessarily required. As someone who works in charge at times, I would probably benefit from these and the department would benefit.

Yes. Courses could be correspondence or at your own pace work at home, but a syllabus should be followed and requirements met without exception.

Yes. So the people coming off the list will be prepared to do the job.

No. Many of the best candidates for Fire Lt. are firefighters with years of firefighting experience and have worked up on that position many times. More credit should be given for experience and less to knowledge gained from books. Experience is the best teacher. Training re-education is on job training.

Yes. All training should be on Fire Dept. time, but essential classes should be offered to qualify people on reports, tactics, radio/MDT, and consistency in inspections.

Yes. I feel the whole department could use more training.

No. You should train the way you want them trained.

Yes. I believe a minimum of 5 years field experience should be required to test. I also think that if one is testing for field Lieutenant that should be their position once promoted, not prevention, inspection, etc.....Test those positions separately. There should also be some type of point scale for those testing who have attended related classes.

Yes.

Yes. Need not be prior - can be part of probation. But there are many areas where the Dept. is liable for supervisor performance, but there is no training. For example, fire inspection quality is extremely variable.

Yes. I believe the programs that have been started, i.e., FLAME classes are what we need. On the job practical training from individuals gifted in a particular field.

No. Because of family matters not all people have time to attend classes.

Yes. Liability purposes.

Yes. It gives the people a chance to learn some of their responsibilities as a Lt. before going to the field.

Yes. Future Lts. Need to acquire skills in management and leadership before promoting. Anyone aspiring to promote should be willing to obtain the necessary skills.

Yes. Prior classes in leadership, strategy and tactics and communication skills.

No. If you mean college type courses I think you would be losing a lot of good potential officers for lack of time, money, family commitments, etc. However, training provided by the Fire Dept. would be easier to work with, and more to the point.

Yes. In the last few years the number of fires has decreased dramatically. There isn't enough "on the job" training. We need to do something to overcome the lack of experience. Required T and E is the only other option we have now.

No. I think that the oral exam process will be adequate to weed out people who they think can't do the job. The job has changed over the years, but I believe that people desiring these positions will do what is necessary to gain the knowledge needed. Testing will eliminate the people who do not study.

Yes. I believe a requirement of basic leadership and strategy/tactics classes should be mandatory to assume a place on the Lts. list. Also, any time of work-ups should count for on education time.

Some things. There are certain skills that officers should be good at along with firefighters like communication skills, customer service, leadership, people skills, yes for those who would like to advance and all personnel.

Yes.

No.

Yes. Help to produce better officers because they have to put forth an effort before they can be promoted.

Yes. If we (firefighters) consider ourselves professionals, then there should be a standard we (firefighters) are expected to meet (achieve).

Yes. For new Lieutenants to be training and education.

No. The cream usually rises. Required training and education does not necessarily translate to the best candidate - the testing procedure should.

No.

No. Training should be offered and expected, but I do not think it needs to be required. Let's offer it on duty. Most interested will take and take it seriously.

Yes. This is a pipe dream though since only some can attend this training and thus “favorites” get the call. If we can’t pay overtime, how will people justify required training.

Yes. More training for F.F. and accountability for City.

Yes. Promotions should be based on the ability to do the job - not time on the job or who likes you.

Yes. I think you should have more than 1 day on the job before you can work up.

Yes. If provided by the department. To prevent decreased public opinion of competence and reduce litigation possibilities.

Yes. It is a good idea, also to make it readily available.

Yes. Associate degree in Fire Science to assure that all candidates have a solid foundation in all aspects of the fire service.

Yes. In key areas I think there should be mandatory training and/or education (areas rated a 4 on previous page).

Yes. If they receive some training before testing they would have a better idea of what they are going to need to know as an officer.

Yes. Five years minimum experience on job.

Yes. You should have 10 years on job experience before promotion.

Yes. All personnel should be capable to fill any role on a fire ground. *From F.F. to I.C. That would make all members qualify.

No.

Yes. It would increase the quality of our fire officers.

Yes. We need to differentiate between FFs and officers with more than a bar on the collar. The difference should be knowledge of the position. Required training and education will help our future officers attain the required knowledge.

Yes.

No. Yes, there should be training and education, but on the job. This Dept. should see that everyone gets equal amounts of training and education in order to qualify for the exam.

Yes. Need to be sure all candidates have a minimum of experience and successful training regardless of their posting.

Yes. If no training or education is required, well then hell, make me chief - I'm qualified.

Yes. To get the best people.

No. Training should be required to get appointed, but not to test. There should be stricter standards to qualify for testing and this appears to be addressed.
REMEMBER – don't confuse time on the job with experience on the job!!

No. Prior training should be offered on a voluntary basis and "highly encouraged". The probation process should be used to determine the extent of a candidate's qualification.

Yes.

Yes. So people have the necessary skills to do the job. Get rid of the superlist thing! Let people who want certain positions test for them.

Yes. Bring candidates to a minimum level of knowledge and skills.

I believe that the Fire Lt. position should be a time on the job. Example: You have been on the job for 5 years or so. Are you interested in becoming a Lt.?

Yes. Should know how to prepare all related paperwork involving the position being promoted to.

Yes.

Yes.

No. Equal for all employees.

No. Only for people who are interested.

No. The City leaders will do as they please, so why waste time and effort!

Yes. There is a difference between good test takers and actually being able to do the job.

Yes.

Yes. There are certain things a Lt. shouldn't be without.

No.

Yes. Minimum 2-year degree in fire service related studies - provides basis of supervision, strategy tactics, prevention, etc.

Yes. There are so many different things related to this position that I feel that the way things are changing, technology, etc., to be a competent officer more training and education should be required.

Yes. FLAME classes are a good beginning.

Yes. This would assure that everyone is tied to the same standard because of consistency of training.

No. A person should have some knowledge of the job which they are testing for. We put so much into our first year as a firefighter, but we're left to fend for ourselves as a new Lt.

No. If the exam is written well the best people will excel. The exam should be prepared in such a way that the people who do the best will have all the necessary skills and knowledge, therefore there is no need for required training.

Yes. Under the present situation if you can pass the test you are promoted. However, what has qualified you for this position? Training in strategy, tactics, problem personnel, probationary policy, legal issues, safety, etc., are very much needed. The days of OJT are, or should be, a thing of the past. Submitted by Phil Ferrell.

No. If you are talking about a college degree you would be eliminating a lot of good prospects. Required training, yes.

Yes. The more formal education someone has to go along with actual field experience, the better officers we will have. Classes taught outside the department are often very professionally taught and offer fresh perspectives.

Yes. Formal testing is okay prior to actual exam. That testing in conjunction with classes will work, it will also validate an important aspect of TQM - service to the customer (internal) training and education, etc.

Yes. It would show that a future candidate is putting forth extra effort to learn the job. Unlike other occupations, a fire Lt. candidate should have all qualifications of that position before appointment. This can only happen with rigorous training and development courses.

Yes. Uniformal [not sure if the writer means uniform or informal] training.

No. Not unless provided by department while on the payroll.

Yes. This would only enhance the abilities of all firefighters, while providing detailed information to those who would be in a supervisory/command position.

Yes. I believe preparation and knowledge is the key to success. Minimum classes in management and supervision can help some be a better supervisor – however, in our field, we need to know a little bit about everything. Like building construction, fire tactics, hazmat incidents, EMS. We must also stay current on these things.

No. Not to qualify for the process, but a period of time to function as Lt. or practice those skills with a Lt. or Cpt. working also. Some Lts. and Cpts. do a great job making sure their driver and 3rd get experience on the job with their supervision and they are much more prepared to work up when needed.

Yes. Due to the inconsistency of experience and training that currently exists. Plus a lack of common sense and judgment on the part of some individual.

Yes. I think the training should be provided to the employee at no cost and on duty, if possible.

Yes. Right now there is no Lt. training. It's study the books on the list and that's it. There are no real classes to teach someone how to be a Lt. The good ones (Lts.) are the ones that do studying and classes on their own.

No. You just never know who or how a person will be to work with. An officer has to be as flexible with every day so no one way works (if that makes any sense).

No. There is no need for a pre-qualification. There is a need for more on the job experience prior to promotion.

Yes. The current in-house "formal" classroom type instruction will be sufficient.

Yes. If required training is truly available for all interested in advancement. Preferably on the job. This type of information is good whether promoted or not. The test should be pertinent and point to the ones most qualified.

No.

Yes. There should be required training and reading from all important areas, and then the test should be written from that training and reading. All test questions should be relevant, important to being a Lt. and just trivia B.S. to see if you read a section of the study material!!!

Yes. To standardize the quality and level of expertise of our supervisory personnel.

No.

Yes. But the testing process should address the level of same.

A required amount of time on job. Some training should be required and provided after passing promotional exam.

No.

Yes. So that we would all be on the same page, so to speak, as far as expectations and job requirements, i.e., consistency at comm. bldg. inspections.

Yes. With prior training, the new "Lts." stepping into their positions will have a better grasp of their duties and responsibilities. Requiring a year's worth (college) of reading material (verified at a local Community College) and expect your new Lts. to be ready is unrealistic. The FLAME classes are an awesome tool to use for Lt. preparation. I'm not slamming those who prescribed this amount of material, please don't take this wrong. The direction you are going is excellent, by requiring classes before promotion will reduce the "cram it in your brain and flush it out as soon as the test is over" mentality. Consolidating test study material and the spreading out of required classes will provide this department with better officers. Things are going in the right direction.

Yes.

No. However, once a list is established, each of these people need to be trained to a minimum standard and given a mentor to work under prior to actual promotion. Also, no person should be allowed to work up with less experience than is required to take the test. The dept. is asking for a catastrophe. Policy must be made to

move an experienced person from their permanent post to accomplish adequate coverage for the good of the dept.

No.

Yes. You have to have training and experience in order to be good at your job.

No. I believe there should be no required training to qualify. I think that not requiring training shows how self-motivated the candidate is to get the training to be proficient at the task. However, I think the department should offer as much opportunity as possible for such people who are interested.

No. Some people may already have obtained those skills and may demonstrate their qualifications through the test/interview process.

Yes. Moving experience from 3 to 5 years minimum is just the first step to ensure experience “under the belt” for future lieutenants to be. Prior training and education for these people should be a must, after all that position carries incredible responsibility. We cannot afford to lack in this area.

No.

Yes. I feel that there should be some sort of training prior to and after promotion provided by the dept., i.e., the tactics class put on by B/C Garza, B/C Mitchell, Capt. Schiesz, Lt. Scott. I think that we all could benefit from it before someone gets hurt.

No. It's genetics that determines what type of officer you are going to be. No amount of training will make a “bad” candidate a good officer - a “mediocre” candidate will remain that regardless of schooling - a good officer will be good without any schooling provided to them.

Yes.

Yes. We should provide access to continuing education in all the relevant fields of study. It only serves to help improve (on the average) the quality of leadership. And then you're assured the candidates have at least been exposed to certain areas of study instead of assuming that they possess the necessary knowledge.

Yes. Standardized training leading to a certificate. Certificate would be required for Lt. promotional.

Yes. Work-up time is very important, that's when I feel I have received the most training.

Yes. Guarantees minimum qualifications.

Yes *. Basic training should be provided/available on duty. To include: inspecting, EMS-fire reports, supervisory stuff, tactics, etc. * I do not believe a college degree should be required.

Yes. To ensure qualified applicants.

No.

Yes. Unfortunately, there are a few officers I don't feel confident/comfortable with their ability or method.

Yes.

Yes.

No. No, it shouldn't be "required". Training and education should be used as bonus points, just like military service. Training and education still do not enable a person to be a good officer, but rather a combination of training (education), studying (test), and experience is needed.

No. No, as far as formal college education - a "degree". Although some college may be useful it should not be required to have. Some basic classes offered by the dept. should certainly be required.

Yes. We'll be putting better quality officers on the street when we give them the skills they need prior to appointment as a Lt.

No. You should be able to get the training that the department wants from the department when time comes. But anyone can get extra on their own.

No. Prior to appointment, but after exam.

No. Not required, but at the very least offered. A constant, well-rounded mentorship program could be put together with classroom and field time.

Yes. Common sense dictates. Poor skills previously.

No.

Yes. You have to have an understanding and experience to lead individuals into fires.

Yes. I am in favor of ongoing training and education for all members, but not a required "list". If you miss "one" class, you're out, would not be a good idea in my mind.

Yes. Because in most other careers you must receive or be trained to carry out the goals and objectives of the leaders at the top. It is necessary to all be on the same page so that cohesion will result. This also breeds closeness, reliance and camaraderie.

No. Five years experience as firefighter. Good people skills and firefighting skills.

Yes. Please inform and train personnel on the exact things required of a new fire lieutenant. Make all reference materials easily available to all prospective applicants. Update all station libraries with current study materials/related reference materials.

No. More training after passing the test.

Yes. Because of the tremendous responsibility.

Yes. It would show the extra desire to become a lieutenant, and also you would end up with a more competent officer.

Yes. Knowledge and experience are the keys to confident, trustworthy leaders. Conversely, the lack of these make for life-threatening mistakes.

No.

Yes. I believe the ongoing education of working a busy rig and "being there" should count for something. As for formal classes, I'm not sure of their effectiveness as compared to the informal learning. I believe also that past performance as a firefighter should be considered in promotion, though I don't know how that could be done.

Yes. Tactics and strategy/fireground management, ICS/IMS.

Yes. The future Lt. should be required to have more experience than what is expected now. There should be classes before they are able to promote.

Yes.

Yes. So that everyone at least starts with the same information.

Yes. Generally, the more qualified and educated someone is, the better leader they'll be. I think a better trained/educated person has a smaller chance to lack the skills many leaders on the department don't have: communication and leadership skills.

Yes. A person needs to know what is expected of them as a fire Lt., but also have some training in what is involved in the job. With prior experience and training they have knowledge to fall back on at incidents that require it.

Yes. Helps those people be ready for job.

Yes. People working in authority must have people skills and concepts in management. They should have some formal education beyond high school like an AA degree or equivalent.

Yes. This is no place or position for "on-the-job training". Prerequisites will produce a more qualified candidate. This is more fair for the candidate (it equips them to do the job) and more fair for the citizen - they receive better service from more knowledgeable officers.

Yes. There should be classes on what the Lts. do! A mentor program to follow up skills and knowledge - measurable, attainable things.

Yes. Every member is required to know most all policies/procedures anyway. Some self-initiative is indicated to make this important position justifiable.

Yes. Too many people don't know what they're doing.

Yes. I feel that the Lts. should understand fully the ICS and the disciplinary actions of the fire department. He should also have the basic understanding of the COs and SOPs.

No. I think training is important, but it doesn't necessarily have to be taken before the exam process. One could tighten up the exam process then train people who do well.

Yes. Some. Some F/F have young families at home and can't spend as much time that others without families or such can. But they are just as qualified sometimes.

Yes. To fill in the gaps of the on-the-job training people get now - specific training before the exam process would enhance the promotion process.

Yes. I feel that the more education, the better the possibility of success.

No. I believe that if the individuals want to advance that they will seek the knowledge and opportunities to prepare on their own. I don't believe that having required classes and for some reason a qualified person can't attend, then they can't promote.

Yes. Require a common sense test.

No. Better, updated, more inclusive SOPs would be of more benefit.

Yes. Offered by TFD, attendance voluntary and unpaid. Because currently there is no formal training for Lts. (or above); just B/C - they pass a written exam they are deemed promotable. **Please!**

No. Time on the job (5 or more years) is the best prior training.

Yes. Experience on a busy company should be required prior to taking exam. Experience is one factor that a written exam cannot adequately test, yet the position is reaction-oriented and handling a situation so often is based on what you have seen succeed or fail in the past.

Yes. There should be required training if it is with time on duty to attend. Or there should be required training after promotion with time on duty to attend.

Yes. Sometimes the field probation does not cover most of the situations or events which a lieutenant will encounter.

Yes. Should be required to have experience on a busy company (>1200 calls/year) - instead of being on a slow company and having lots of study time.

Yes. The study material is just that, I feel that criteria should be set forth and then the person evaluated as to the ability/competency of said person. A good example is the military service-wide exams.

Yes.

Yes. So they will have the knowledge from the start rather than learning as they go.

Yes. Fire attack methods and most effective use and management of water.

Yes.

Yes. Testing by itself is inadequate, especially if the test is on trivial subject matter.

Yes. It is the department's responsibility to train and educate its people to assume positions of higher responsibility and it is also the department's responsibility to select the most qualified for the position. Training and education make for better candidates.

No. It seems that the primary skills needed to qualify for lieutenant are gained through experience.

Yes.

Yes. Some job related classes should be required.

Yes. I think there should be a Captain mentoring program on each shift.

No.

No. As long as you receive training and guidance during your probationary 6 months, I think it would be fine. Maybe some required classes after you've passed the exam process, but seniority should play a larger part and less of this subjective oral board stuff which tends to just be the buzz words for the '90s' or imaginary firefighter questions.

Yes. Not all firefighters get the same training from their Lts. (don't have good role models). Maybe not required 'prior' education, but training during probation, and accountability for not doing well. Similar to F/F probation, specific tasks and projects (not the aa type) to be completed showing knowledge of position. Program similar to NFDA apprenticeship.

Yes. Training in accordance with the ability to handle the Lt./supervisory position. The ability to test well does not indicate the ability to lead.

Yes. In-house class, for example the FLAME class. Other than in-house, no.

Yes. It's not just the normal realm of things to go. It is an advancement up the command structure.

No. But the test should be such that candidates would need to study a wide variety of subjects to be able to pass.

Yes. I feel that as a department we do a poor job of preparing ourselves for leadership roles. We should not have to depend on members to make voluntary efforts to receive training, i.e., FLAME classes. It is the department's responsibility to train us.

No. Even people with prior education need to brush up or be brought up to speed on departmental policies/procedures/requirements.

Yes.

No.

Yes. The current test seems nearly an arbitrary test. If we had required courses with passing grades required, we could skip the written exam and have educated candidates.

No. But I think it should be required during their probationary period and time as they await promotion (on list).

Yes. Writing skills, a 90- or 100-level college course and some interpersonal relations.

No. OJT is how we started as F/Fs! You're not allowed to take the test until you've been on the job a certain number of years and this is where you get your basics. During probation, enhance the basics and throughout career provide ongoing refresher courses.

Yes. Some classes pertaining to people skills in addition to technical training.

Yes. Too often unqualified/ignorant "work-ups" are placed in a position to make decisions they are not qualified to make. Whether it be lack of knowledge, inability to use the MDT/CADS/RMS system, or inexperience with fires/EMS, early structured training could help alleviate this problem.

Yes. The prior education/training would prove invaluable in every aspect of our profession. Each member of our department would have a better understanding of our goals, procedures, etc. It would also identify those of officer quality vs. those who merely test well.

No. I feel there should be a stronger process of training once the Lieutenant's examination process has been passed. I feel it should be most similar to the process probationary F/Fs go through.

Yes. Training and education makes good leadership.

Yes. Incident command; fire strategy/tactics; leadership; 5 years experience.

No. I'm a product of experience, knowledge attained by waiting for years before testing, but viewed by Administration as a detriment because by waiting for (on the job experience) gives the impression as not as driven or not an up and comer.

Yes. The way it stands now, a probationary lieutenant has little to no training. They need some preparation as to the realities and day to day responsibilities.

Yes. The current process does not prepare individuals for officer positions. I have several areas of concern that are currently not being addressed in an academic environment, i.e., leadership, tactics, managerial skills, discipline, report writing, IMS (ICS), etc. Submitted by Michael S. Mitchell

Yes. The training to be an officer in TFD is lacking. I believe there should be a course that must be completed with a passing score prior to being eligible to take the exam.

Yes. Currently, with no required training/education, many areas a first level supervisor should have are not being met.

Yes. I would like to see a training syllabus made up by the department. That would be signed off by Training. This would need to be completed prior to testing.

Yes. It is not fair to our people to throw them into a leadership position without giving them the tools they need to be successful and effective.

Yes. If paid and provided. If not, no.

7. **If there were any areas of training or education that were not mentioned in the questions above that you think would be important to a Fire Lieutenant prior to his or her first day of promotion, please add any comments or concerns below you feel the team should be aware of.**

Computer.

In all the books and technical publications I have read studying for Lt., most deal with how the authors deal with situations on their depts. Although good, sound tactics and strategies are universal, the real meat of being an effective officer is in having the experience to deal with problems that arise time and time again. All the theoretical methods are well and fine, but having seen what works and knowing how to apply lessons learned by observing quality leadership/by experience is the best way to produce a quality officer.

Inspection consistency.

Not in terms of subject matter. Delivery of training ignores the irregular nature of our shift schedule. Provide each class/course twice.

We are not using well respected leaders in the department to teach the younger. I even suggest inviting some retired officers back to share their knowledge and experience with the TFD officers.

Remember that it's not just book smarts that make a Lt. You need good common sense and field experience.

Must have at least 1 year drivers experience.

I do believe a floating list (rotating list) so that if you pass a Lt. exam once and are given a placement on the list as the next 3 year list is established any remaining personnel should automatically head the new list.

How one can enjoy their jobs and have fun doing it while providing great services. Lighten up, Dude.

Hire the best person for the job without regard to race or gender. Have a meaningful probationary period - be impartial and frank during evaluations.

How about hiring Lieutenants off the list as a class with rankings and send them through an academy once a year. Six weeks of training in critical areas and everyone comes out on the same page thinking.

Seems like the Lts. job is just a token position that anyone can fill at anytime. Just work someone up and don't worry about it.

More time on the job or a way of tracking number of calls run per individual as part of the equation, i.e., experience points vs. chronological. (E-15 vs. E-10)

I think the most important thing for a fire Lt. is past on the job experience! Five years to be a minimum!

Common sense.

Should be concerned with whether or not an individual can or cannot effectively extinguish a fire and coordinate an emergency medical scene.

Basic building construction.

Give them field experience.

Take away the written test that fills your mind full of superfluous bullshit and return to basics. The above procedure would help in making a Lt. become knowledgeable and help gain confidence along with a sense of leadership.

Computer skills.

No.

You listed people skills - how can you teach that?? People are set. It's hard to make somebody a people person. Sometimes a badge multiplies their problems.

I think they were adequately covered.

Sexual harassment/race relations training.

People skills and firefighting tactics should be paramount. This would be in the best interest of the team and the public (people skills on aid calls and work relationships; tactics on fires to limit damage).

I think a program to develop and culture officers is necessary. I think the first test should qualify the individual for the training program. Then the program would encompass all facets of fire dept. operation. In the process, the person would study, test and move to the next block of training. During this training process, passing each station would be necessary. Ultimately, the test for promotion would establish the list of persons "qualified" to be officers. Submitted by Phil Ferrell.

Since we don't get very many fires, the more fire-related classes people receive the better. More emphasis on customer service, especially on EMS calls. Fire suppression systems and fire inspection technique classes would be good. (Also run down on how Communications works, etc.)

Orientation to supervision and counseling techniques. The importance of holding a commission in this city. Everyone is not suited for working at Communications – maybe you need to back away from required stay there!

Pretty much covered in survey.

Computer training to enter fire reports.

None.

I would stress more on the subjects of communication (personnel and interactive); also EMS protocol.

I think we need to construct an "OTC" - Officers Training Course. Be it a 3 or 5 day class on covering everyday things an officer needs to know. Example: paperwork, fire reports, reporting exposures, disciplinary actions, fire tactics, etc. This would make things more uniform, but will prevent people from shooting off the hip.

Be flexible and patient.

I am not qualified to have an opinion in this matter.

Public relations/perceptions.

Tacoma City government overview, Total Quality concepts, understanding of strategy and tactics (the whys and how comes).

Motivation - this job really depends on self-motivated type people to do the job well.

The City needs to offer tuition reimbursement for fire service courses at local colleges. Mandatory organized scenario-driven training needs to be pushed by Training. It's not years on the job that gives experience, it is runs, i.e., 1 year at 10s = 10 years at 15s.

Ten years experience before taking test; five years between each promotion.

Through [? thorough] CADS & RMS training.

It was mentioned, but I would like to stress the opportunity to work up, also the Lt. should explain and help their crew understand their job and the responsibility of the position more. I also think decision making skills are very important.

Officers from Chiefs down who have personal problems should not be allowed to let them affect the rest of the personnel in the stations.

I can't think of any at this time.

How to get along with people around you and the art of compromise would be good subjects for fire officer candidates, but again refer to question #6's answer. (#6 It's genetics that determine what type of officer you are going to be. No amount of training will make a "bad" candidate a good officer - a "mediocre" candidate will remain that regardless of schooling - a good officer will be good without any schooling provided to them.)

No.

On job training: i.e., allow driver or 3rd work in charge w/ officer present. This would allow on job training w/ instant feedback.

We take the time to train firefighters before placing them in the field, we train fire communication officers prior to field duties, we train fire inspectors prior to field duties. We need to establish set criteria to train fire lieutenants **BEFORE** placing them in the field. Put them on two weeks special assignment at Training to be trained. You would not put an EMT out in the field as a paramedic until he has completed all of his/her training.

Training to build confidence in leadership through example, not to just follow the crowd for fear of ridicule.

Basic hazmat, urban rescue - high angle rescue.

Butt Smooching 101.

MDT training and computer report training.

Ten years experience and must also serve as driver for two years and a firefighter (not paramedic) for five years.

Re-emphasizing a strong emphasis on strategy and tactics plus communication (radio) is of utmost importance to me.

I also think fire strategies need to be brought up. I'd like to add "more often", but when are they brought up? I really can't believe we can't find the time to write a brief post-fire critique of major fires - is there an explanation?

- As a subset of strategy and tactics - decision making, size-up, & risk management.
- The role of the Chief's Aide in passport accountability and fireground/emergency scene safety management.
- Management of the technical/special rescue scene
- Company officer's role in disaster response & preparation
- The officer's role in pre-fire/pre-incident training.

No preference to "over achievers" or resume builders. JOB RELEVANT test procedures.

More ICS classes. More classes that involve the size-up and tactics of firefighting.

Computer skills: RMS, MDT.

Possibly in the future fire promotional reading material could be made available over the Internet.

There is a need for experience in emergency situations.

Experience.

I think you get most of them.

MDT and CADS experience. Knowing how the department works - who handles what or fixes what.

No.

Decision making. Be responsible for actions.

Computer training to write and file reports and inspections.

Common sense training! Mastery of social skills!

Training is establishing what the true problem is “before” the solution is implemented.

The current list seems to cover the expected scope of practice.

Temporary appointment and working up.

Experience.

I believe a proactive approach in providing prior educational requirements would greatly increase an individual’s potential ability to serve in an officer position. The traditional approach of studying many different sources has much to be changed. It is ineffective and shortsighted. Mandatory requirements should be in place prior to eligibility for Lt. and again throughout one’s career. Education! Education! Education! Submitted by Michael S. Mitchell

As a newer member of TFD, I constantly hear TFD personnel complain about the lack of any quality classes involving officer leadership. Personnel complain that there are no orders to help prepare them for a leadership role. Also, it is felt that there is little preparation for company tactical training. Areas with some specialized training should be required such as confined space training/trench rescue.